

Pedestrian Safety Corridor - Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West

Date: August 10, 2017

To: North York Community Council

From: Acting Director, Transportation Services, North York District

Wards: Ward 16 - Eglinton-Lawrence

SUMMARY

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on Avenue Road, City Council approval of this report is required.

North York Community Council, at its meeting on February 22, 2017, deferred consideration of Item NY20.12, which recommended against the reduction of the speed limit on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West, from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Staff were requested to meet with the school communities fronting on Avenue Road, local residents, and the local Councillor, to explore a range of alternate design solutions as soon as possible.

As a result of the follow-up review, Transportation Services are proposing to designate this section of Avenue Road as a Pedestrian Safety Corridor, due to the presence of vulnerable pedestrians and the street's physical geometry. As part of this designation, a number of enhancements will be implemented, including a reduced 40 km/h speed limit. The lowered speed limit will be reinforced with narrowed traffic lanes and a painted buffer between the curb lane and the sidewalk. The narrowing of the lanes will necessitate the removal of on-street parking on this section of street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director, Transportation Services, North York District recommends that:

1. City Council adopt the traffic regulations outlined in Appendix "A" attached to the report entitled, "Pedestrian Safety Corridor - Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West", from the Acting Director, Transportation Services, North York District.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

All costs associated with traffic amendments on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West, are included within the Transportation Services 2017 Operating Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

North York Community Council, at its meeting on February 22, 2017, deferred consideration of Item NY20.12, which recommended against the reduction of the speed limit on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West, from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Staff were requested to meet with the school communities fronting on Avenue Road, local residents, and the local Councillor and explore a range of alternate design solutions as soon as possible. The Council decision can be found at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.NY20.12>

City Council, at its meeting on April 26, 2017 approved Item NY28.40, which amended the east-west left-turn and straight-through prohibitions at Avenue Road and Castlefield Avenue from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday to operate at all times. The Council decision can be found at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.MM28.40>

COMMENTS

Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue and Eglinton Avenue, is designated as a major arterial roadway and is approximately 2.3 km in length. It consists of a four lane cross-section, with two lanes per direction. Left-turn lanes are introduced along this section of roadway based on the need and available roadway width. Municipal sidewalks exist adjacent to the curb on both sides of Avenue Road. Horizontal curves exist on Avenue Road in the vicinity of Glenview Avenue, Glencairn Avenue and Burnaby Boulevard. TTC service in this section of Avenue Road is provided by the 6 Avenue and 142 Downtown / Avenue Rd bus routes.

The following pavement widths are generally in place on this section of Avenue Road:

- Between Lawrence Avenue West and Strathallan Boulevard - 16.5 metres
- Between Strathallan Boulevard and Burnaby Boulevard - 16.2 metres
- Between Burnaby Boulevard and Eglinton Avenue West - 18.9 metres

The speed limit on this section of Avenue Road is 50 km/h, with the exception of the area between Briar Hill Avenue and Willowbank Boulevard, which has a 40 km/h school speed zone, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. The 40 km/h speed limit is identified by the use of flashing beacons and regulatory signage in both directions of travel. The limit of the 40 km/h speed zone encompasses both Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School and Allenby Junior Public School.

Advisory 30 km/h curve warning signs are provided on the horizontal curve in the vicinity of Burnaby Boulevard. Advisory 40 km/h curve warning signs are provided on the horizontal curves in the vicinity of Glencairn Avenue and Glenview Avenue.

In general, on-street parking is permitted along Avenue Road at all times except during peak periods. Between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday, stopping is prohibited on the west side of the roadway for southbound traffic. Between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday period, stopping is prohibited on the east side of the roadway for northbound traffic.

This section of Avenue Road is primarily comprised of low density residential properties. The following land uses of note are located within this section of Avenue Road:

- Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School is located on the east side of Avenue Road, north of Elwood Boulevard;
- Allenby Junior Public School is located on the west side of Avenue Road, between St. Clements Avenue and Castlefield Avenue;
- Havergal College is located on the east side of Avenue Road, south of Lawrence Avenue West;
- North Toronto Early Years Learning Centre, a daycare, is located at Avenue Road and Castlefield Avenue;
- Living Life on The Avenue, a retirement residence, is located at Avenue Road and Willowbank Boulevard;
- Lytton Park is located at Avenue Road and Lytton Boulevard;
- Heart Park is located at Avenue Road and Otter Crescent; and
- Briar Hill Parkette is located at Avenue Road and Briar Hill Avenue.

The Ward Councillor, Transportation Services and City Planning met on-site on June 16, 2017 to discuss viable options for this corridor along Avenue Road to enhance safety for pedestrians, as well as road users, because much concern has been expressed by members of the local community regarding the increase in speeding along this portion of Avenue Road.

To quantify the concerns of the residents and to identify the existing traffic conditions, a number of 24-hour speed studies were conducted on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West, on June 20 and 21, 2017.

The following table identifies the results of those studies:

Table 1: Avenue Road Speed Data

Section of Avenue Road	Direction	Speed Limit (km/h)	School Speed Zone (km/h)	Speed Data (km/h)			
				Operating			Average
				All Day	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	5 p.m. - 8 a.m.	
Lawrence Avenue West to Otter Crescent	NB	50	Not applicable	64			52
	SB			61			54
Otter Crescent to Lytton Boulevard	NB			59			49
	SB			60			49
Lytton Boulevard to Briar Hill Boulevard	NB			58			48
	SB			60			48
Briar Hill Boulevard to Roselawn Avenue	NB		40	60	57	65	50
	SB		56	53	60	43	
Roselawn Avenue to Willowbank Boulevard	NB		58	55	61	46	
	SB		37	54	61	47	
Willowbank Boulevard to Eglinton Avenue West	NB		Not applicable	61			51
	SB		Not applicable	54			42

The results of the vehicle speed studies for Avenue Road have confirmed that operating speeds, the speed at which 85% of the motorists are travelling at or below, are generally in a range of 54 to 64 km/h, and the average vehicle speeds are in a range of 42 to 52 km/h. In the section of roadway that is designated as a 40 km/h school speed zone, the operating speeds are in a range of 53 to 57 km/h.

Therefore, the recent speed data indicates that motorists are generally travelling more than 10 km/h above the posted speed limit, regardless of the section of Avenue Road or whether a 40 km/h or 50 km/h speed limit is in effect.

In view of the excessive speeds recorded on Avenue Road, the number of land uses having vulnerable pedestrians, and the existing road geometry which requires a reduced speed limit in a number of locations, Transportation Services recommends the introduction of a Pedestrian Safety Corridor. This designation will encompass all pedestrian types (i.e. school-age children and seniors) and will be more effective than a number of different safety zones installed in succession. This is not a formal designation and does not require City Council approval.

To date, the following enhancements have already been undertaken in this section of Avenue Road:

- a red-light camera has been installed at the intersection of Avenue Road and Lawrence Avenue West;
- the prohibition of the eastbound and westbound left-turn and straight through movements at Avenue Road and Castlefield Avenue were recently amended from operating during the weekday peak periods to operating at all times to address a high rate of collisions involving these movements; and
- the installation of a temporary speed display board for southbound traffic on Avenue Road fronting Allenby Junior Public School.

The above-noted changes did not require the approval of City Council. Further to these changes, and in support of the Pedestrian Safety Corridor designation, it is recommended that a posted 40 km/h speed limit be implemented on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West. This speed limit reduction was not previously embraced by Transportation Services because no other changes were being made or recommended on Avenue Road.

In order to ensure the optimal effectiveness of this regulation, the following enhancements will be made in conjunction with this speed limit reduction:

- The through lanes on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Burnaby Boulevard, would be narrowed through the use of pavement markings. A buffer area will be created between the curb lane and the sidewalk. The width of this buffer area will vary, depending on the pavement width and the presence of left-turn lanes on Avenue Road. The buffer will be at least 0.2 metres on each side of the road in the narrowest sections and 1.8 metres on each side in the widest sections. These pavement markings will provide visual cues to motorists to reduce their speeds and will provide greater separation between motorists and pedestrians on the sidewalks.

An existing example of this treatment can be found on the east side of the road, immediately north of Burnaby Boulevard;

- Future evaluation is required to determine the most appropriate treatment of this curb-side buffer, referenced above. At its widest, it will safely accommodate a cyclist. However, where it is narrow, a combination of alternate treatment and cycle infrastructure markings, such as "share the road", may be deployed;
- Parking will be prohibited at all times on both sides of Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Burnaby Boulevard, to accommodate the proposed buffer areas. Approximately 43 spaces will be removed on the west side of Avenue Road and approximately 102 parking spaces will be removed on the east side of Avenue Road. However, based on numerous site observations, the demand for on-street parking on this section of Avenue Road is relatively low. These displaced motorists will be able to park on the many side-streets on both sides of Avenue Road;
- The Pay & Display parking that operates in a parking bay on the east side of Avenue Road between Eglinton Avenue West and Burnaby Boulevard, would be maintained for patrons of the businesses located along Eglinton Avenue West;
- All of the pedestrian crosswalk markings at intersections along Avenue Road will be upgraded with zebra markings to enhance visibility;
- The temporary speed display board fronting Allenby Junior Public School will be made permanent; and
- The school speed zone that operates by time of day will be rescinded, as a consistent 40 km/h speed limit will be in place at all times on Avenue Road. However, the school signs and flashing beacons will remain in place without the speed limit reductions.

Additionally, Transportation Services' review disclosed that the peak period stopping prohibitions on both sides of Avenue Road do not include several blocks south of Lawrence Avenue West. As this section has similar traffic volumes and characteristics, the peak period, peak direction by-lawed stopping prohibitions on Avenue Road will be amended to cover the entire corridor, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West.

Further, Transportation Services are continuing to evaluate requests to prohibit eastbound and westbound left-turn and straight-through movements at the following intersecting streets on Avenue Road where poor sightlines and high collision rates have been reported as a safety concern:

- Briar Hill Avenue;
- Willowbank Boulevard; and
- Glencairn Avenue.

Further review of these three locations is required, including a detailed collision analysis and assessment of the impacts of the displaced traffic resulting from these prohibitions. If supported, a follow-up report will be required to be submitted by Transportation Services to North York Community Council.

As mentioned previously, the revised lane marking plan will be developed to provide the most appropriate treatment for cyclists in relation to the curb-side buffer.

Finally, Transportation Services will also consider changes to the timings at the traffic control signals in this section of Avenue Road, to ensure adequate crossing time is being provided to accommodate the vulnerable pedestrian crossing types.

The Ward Councillor is aware of the recommendation in this staff report.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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Acting Director

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix "A" – Traffic Regulations to be Amended
Attachment 1: Map - Pedestrian Safety Corridor - Avenue Road, between Lawrence
Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West

Appendix "A"

Traffic regulations to be amended

1. City Council approve the reduction of the speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West.
2. City Council rescind the existing School Speed Zone on Avenue Road, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, between a point approximately 10 metres north of Willowbank Boulevard and approximately 10 metres north of Briar Hill Avenue.
3. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, on the east side of Avenue Road, between Elwood Boulevard and Roselawn Avenue.
4. City Council amend the existing parking prohibition in effect from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday, except public holidays, on the east side of Avenue Road, between College View Avenue and a point 30.5 metres south of Burnaby Boulevard, to operate between College View Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West.
5. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect at all times, on the east side of Avenue Road, between Burnaby Boulevard and Willowbank Boulevard.
6. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect at all times, on the east side of Avenue Road, between Briar Hill Avenue and Hillhurst Boulevard.
7. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect at all times, on the west side of Avenue Road, between Glencairn Avenue and Strathallan Boulevard.
8. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, except public holidays, on the east side of Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Kimbark Boulevard.
9. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, except public holidays, on the west side of Avenue Road, between Glengrove Avenue West and Lawrence Avenue West.
10. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect at all times, on the west side of Avenue Road, between Eglinton Avenue West and Willowbank Boulevard.
11. City Council rescind the existing parking prohibition in effect at all times, on the west side of Avenue Road, between Castlefield Avenue and St. Clements Avenue.
12. City Council amend the existing stopping prohibition, in effect from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, except public holidays, on the east side of Avenue Road, between Burnaby Boulevard and Kimbark Boulevard, to operate between Burnaby Boulevard and Lawrence Avenue West.

13. City Council amend the existing stopping prohibition, in effect from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday, except public holidays, on the west side of Avenue Road, between Oxtan Avenue and Kimbark Boulevard, to operate between Oxtan Avenue and Lawrence Avenue West.

14. City Council prohibit parking at all times on both sides of Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue West and Burnaby Boulevard.